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THE "MILLION CITY" IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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361 162 IN A world survey of cities with a population of one million or more, made in 1931, Mark Jefferson[1] could not include a single representative from Southeast Asia. Since 1945 five cities in this area have attained the million status—Jakarta, Manila, Saigon, Bangkok, and Singapore. Of all the major political units in this part of Asia, only Burma has failed to produce a "million city." In Malaya, the most highly urbanized country, 35 per cent of the population live in towns of 5000 or more, and towns of more than 10,000 increased their population by 52.6 per cent in the last intercensal period, 1931–1947. But the concept of Southeast Asia as an area of rural peoples with a rhythm of life determined by rice cultivation is still largely correct. The proportion of urban dwellers is about the average for the Asian continent, and, except possibly in Java, there are far fewer cities, in relation to the level of population, than in either South or East Asia.

361 By Western standards the countries of Southeast Asia had only one city apiece until very recently. Most of the other settlements of any size were overgrown villages, and in some degree they still retain aspects of their village origin. In Southeast Asia the evolution of indigenous cities on the Chinese or Indian scale was not possible. Chesneaux[2] suggests that many of the large indigenous Asian cities grew up within "the traditional framework of the great agricultural empires," but in both peninsular and archipelagic Southeast Asia physical fragmentation, reinforced by a great diversity of peoples, hindered the development of large states. Though occasionally established, they were highly unstable and of short duration. The princely houses of the petty native states were insufficient stimuli to city growth, and commerce was equally inadequate. The only effective impulse, as Credner[3] points out, was a favorable combination of trade foci with administrative, military, and religious functions of the highest order. Dependence on changeable watercourses for irrigated rice culture and transportation, and the personal whim of the ruler, produced a marked arbitrariness

[1] Mark Jefferson: Distribution of the World's City Folks, *Geogr. Rev.*, Vol. 21, 1931, pp. 446–465.

[2] J. E. Spencer: Changing Asiatic Cities, *Geogr. Rev.*, Vol. 41, 1951, pp. 336–337, discussing Jean Chesneaux: Notes sur l'évolution récente de l'habitat urbain en Asie, *L'Information Géographique*, Vol. 13, 1949, pp. 169–175, and Vol. 14, 1950, pp. 1–8.

[3] Wilhelm Credner: Siam, das Land der Tai (Stuttgart, 1935), p. 366.

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in city location, and the small extent of states ensured that cities could only be of moderate size, grouped around the *kraton*, or palace. 361

Thus the integration of several small territorial units into a political state was a necessary preliminary to the appearance of the large city. But even the extensive colonial possessions created by the European powers could not, with their comparatively simple economies, support more than one large city each. This was inevitably located at the point of entry. Singapore, however, is anomalous: its external lines of communication have more than compensated for its earlier lack of direct access into the Malay Peninsula.

The large city, then, is a foreign innovation, possessing a high proportion of nonindigenous inhabitants, serving mainly foreign interests, and tacked onto a rural background. The achievement of independence in much of Southeast Asia, and its approach elsewhere, must bring many changes in the relations of the large city with the rest of the country.

Fulfilling similar functions as administrative, judicial, and above all commercial centers, and providing other specialized services mainly for their own inhabitants and the outside world rather than for the country as a whole, the "million" cities thus present many similar features of morphology and development, despite variations in their historical and cultural backgrounds. It is not surprising that the two oldest cities, Manila (1571) and Jakarta (1619), founded in the era of Mercantilism, possess the greatest similarities and are apparently to continue comparable development as the capitals of new states. On the other hand, the two nineteenth-century cities, Singapore (1819) and Saigon (1859), are strikingly different. Bangkok (1782) is the only indigenous city in Southeast Asia that has attained first rank, but until comparatively recently it functioned rather as the focus of what has often been described as an economic appendage of the British Empire than as the capital of an independent state. Though the smallest of the five cities in numbers, Singapore is the most important, both economically and strategically. More than any of the others it serves the whole of Southeast Asia, and its future is perhaps the most obscure.

The Foundation of the Cities

The sites of the great cities were places of little importance, selected by foreigners on technical considerations that had no validity for the indigenous inhabitants. The aim of the Europeans was to create economic bases at tidewater, and only later did the administrative function become equally significant. Singapore was virtually uninhabited, though a flourishing commercial center had existed on approximately the same site some centuries

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before. Manila and Jakarta, though located in populous countrysides, arose from minor settlements, and Saigon was nothing more than a village surrounding an Annamese imperial fortress. Bangkok illustrates the arbitrariness of city location dependent on the personal decision of the ruler; for though founded on the site of an earlier settlement, this possessed no particular geographical significance and was unoccupied by indigenous peoples at the time.

With the exception of Saigon, all the great cities were founded in the days of sail, but, despite the unexacting requirements of sailing vessels, good harbors with safe anchorages, facilities for careening, and easy access into the interior were not readily found in Southeast Asia, where the modest tides of the shallow seas on the Sunda Shelf only occasionally bring deep water close inshore. It cannot be said that the sites selected by the Europeans were always the best. Silting has been a problem, and technological changes have necessitated almost everywhere the creation of virtually new ports close to the old towns to cope with the increasing size and draft of vessels, and to expedite the handling of new export commodities. It is not surprising, therefore, that the indigenous Bangkok has tended to lag behind.

Manila, the oldest of the five cities, is perhaps also the most interesting. It did not begin primarily as a port and commercial base, nor did its early start confer the usual advantages, in spite of the possession of what is probably the best natural harbor in the whole of Southeast Asia. Manila Bay, protected by the mountainous Bataan Peninsula, and with a relatively narrow entrance, gives shelter from the prevailing winds and the occasional typhoons that cross Luzon. Its north shore is formed by the swamps of the delta of the Pasag and Pampanga Rivers, but on the east a narrow strip of plain lies between it and the southern Sierra Madre. Part of this plain is occupied by the extensive but shallow Laguna de Bay, whose outlet is the short and meandering Pasig River. At its mouth were two stockaded Muslim settlements, from the southerly of which the present city takes its name. The potentialities of Manila as a fortress and administrative center were at once recognized, and its splendid harbor and nodality in relation to the productive plains gave it an ascendancy over the earlier Cebu city (1565). But in a colony that was itself a dependency of another colony, and separated from the homeland by two oceans, economic development was retarded.

The objective of Jan Pieterszoon Coen, the founder of Batavia, was the establishment of an economic base[4] that would free the Dutch East India

[4] B. H. M. Vlekke: Nusantara: A History of the East Indian Archipelago (Cambridge, Mass., 1943), pp. 122–123.

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Company from English and Chinese competition and be strong enough to deter native princes from interfering in the Company's activities. Essentially, commerce was of greater importance than administration in old Batavia, though the Company could hardly avoid participation in politics; the recent change of the city's name to Jakarta, the name of the native settlement on whose site the city arose, is indicative of a change of function as well as of political control. The city began its life as a storehouse, which was secretly fortified and after a successful defense against the English and the local ruler was made the nucleus of a new town. Expediency seems to have been the principal reason for selection of the site. Certainly the harbor had little to commend it, and early in the eighteenth century silting was already a problem.

Bangkok is the only indigenous city of Southeast Asia to attain a population of one million, at least in modern times, though Jogjakarta is estimated to have reached this level during the postwar Indonesian movement for independence. The geographical focus of Thailand is clearly in the lower Menam plain, but for four centuries the capital was Ayutthaya, some 60 miles upstream (1350–1767). After the destruction of Ayutthaya by the Burmese, Thonburi, a fort on the west bank of the Menam Chao Phraya, was selected as the new national capital, but in 1782 a further dynastic change led to the establishment of a new administrative capital on the opposite bank, then unoccupied save for a small community of Chinese traders. Situated on a bend in the river some 20 miles from the sea and surrounded by marshland, the site of Bangkok possessed the sole but great advantage of being easily defended.

Saigon, like Bangkok, is a riverine city and tidal port set in a broad alluvial lowland, but it is more than twice as far removed from the sea. When captured by the French in 1859, it was the main political center of the newly colonized Annamese land of Cochin China and consisted of an agglomeration of native huts around the imperial fortress, with virtually no permanent buildings. The French immediately began its reconstruction as a modern city, so that, unlike the other four cities, Saigon has no old core. Nothing is left at present of the native town. Cholon, the "great market" some three miles to the west along the Arroyo Chinois, is an entirely separate Chinese foundation dating from about 1778. Though the cities have now coalesced, each retains its own distinctive character and functions, and the "Région de Saigon-Cholon" is thus a true twin city, unique in Southeast Asia.

Singapore is anomalous in being situated on an island, and, like Bangkok,

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361 it did not arise on a previous settlement. The modern development of the Malay Peninsula could not have been imagined by Raffles in 1819; he intended that his city should achieve pre-eminence by its policy of free trade, which would attract the Chinese entrepôt trade from Batavia. The site selected lay on the south coast of Singapore Island, where the mangrove-lined Singapore River discharged into the sea. Here was situated what was probably the best anchorage in the days of sail; for the roads between Tanjong Rhu and Tanjong Pagar gave good protection from all but south-east winds, and the force of these was broken by islands to the south.

The Old Towns

361 The great cities were developed on a plan, rather than allowed to grow
503 haphazardly, but it is hardly surprising that technological and sociological changes have defeated the aims of the early planners. The old towns represented the transplanting of the city forms of contemporary Europe to South-east Asia. The walled city of Intramuros, the older section of Manila, was a replica of the fortified town of sixteenth-century Europe, as was the earlier Portuguese Malacca. Batavia was likewise a fortified city, but the low terrain and abundant water encouraged the Dutch to copy the characteristic features of the cities of Holland. Thus old Batavia, the *Benedenstad*, was constructed on both sides of the Tjiliwong, and canals on a rectangular pattern were excavated.

Nearness to water, yet with freedom from flooding, was the essential requirement of all the cities, but seasonal variations in precipitation and periodic torrential downpours continue from time to time to defeat even modern techniques of civil engineering. The Batavian canals were only partly successful: in the wet seasons they flooded, and in dry periods they degenerated into a "dismal succession of filthy bogs and stagnant pools."[5] Pollution of the canals and the extension of the coastal swamps due to sedimentation gave old Batavia an evil reputation for disease.

Bangkok and Saigon, on low alluvial plains, with great seasonal fluctuations in river levels, were confronted with difficult problems. Official buildings commanded the little higher ground that was available, and the great bulk of the population lived in wooden houses built on stilts or on pontoons. Early Bangkok had no street pattern. The Royal City, or "Grand Palace," was a self-contained walled city, about a square mile in area, with palaces, temples, and administrative buildings. A canal across the neck of the bend in the Chao Phraya converted the old city into an island, outside which

[5] J. J. Stockdale: Sketches of the Island of Java (London, 1811), p. 129.

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permanent buildings and roads did not exist and all communication was by boat along the canals, or "klongs."

Singapore possessed the advantage of greater topographic variety. Eminences of granite formed good sites for public buildings, and the city spread out over the land above flood level on both sides of the swampy Singapore River.

All the old towns, with the exception of the architecturally exotic Bangkok, have a gridiron layout, which has meant the maximum of congestion in modern times. Racial zonation, well marked in the old towns, has tended to persist. Europeans have long since abandoned their old quarters, but the Chinese have remained in strength; indigenous peoples, however, are significantly absent. In Manila and Bangkok the old cores have been retained intact and new business and financial quarters have been created away from the old cities. Though Intramuros has lost its military functions and most of its administrative ones, it still keeps, in part, those of a judicial and religious nature. Old Bangkok, however, has lost little of its earlier importance and is one of the greatest tourist attractions in Southeast Asia. In Singapore and Jakarta the old core has been reconstructed as the business district, but since this took place before the advent of the motor vehicle, congestion is still acute. Saigon, having no old core and therefore able to plan its development without encumbrances, nevertheless also adopted a gridiron layout, but it is not easy to suggest an alternative that would have made better use of the environment.

The Expansion of the Cities

The rapid growth of the cities in the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries has been due to the investment of capital, largely from the mother country, in production for export; the consequent improvement of the ports and the creation of a communications network focusing on them; a considerable increase in the scope of administrative activities; and, more recently, the establishment of secondary industries. Though these have provided the impetus, expansion has been possible only through the application of new techniques of engineering (particularly in drainage and water supply) and preventive medicine, making the cities as healthy as those of the West.

The three centuries of stagnation in Manila is a remarkable historical record. Expansion beyond the walls of Intramuros began almost a century later than the growth of old Batavia, which too had suffered a period of stagnation in the seventeenth century. Even the short British occupation (1762–1764) and the revolt of the American colonies failed to arouse Spanish interest in the distant possession, and the growth of Manila in the latter half

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of the nineteenth century was a reflection of the investment of foreign capital in the archipelago, stimulated by the opening of the Suez Canal. In 1863 relocation of the administrative area began, with the move of the Governor to the Malacañan Palace, north of the river, and in the last three decades of Spanish rule development on the north bank of the Pasig was rapid. After the American occupation Manila grew quickly. A modern harbor was constructed on reclaimed land on the seaward side of Intramuros (1903), and the main development of the city was shifted south of the Pasig, where new administrative and residential districts were created. Since World War II the city has again expanded, owing partly to an influx of population from the country, and partly to the use of reconstruction funds for development. The built-up area is now practically continuous from the swamps of the Bitas River mouth in the north to Parañaque in the south, a distance of about 10 miles. Northeast and southeast of the urban fringe, rice fields still cover the plain, and parts of the city itself are regularly flooded in the rainy season (April-October). Development has proceeded farthest inland on the higher ground between the coastal plain and the Marikina River, which drains southward to the Pasig. Here are the newer districts of Mandaluyong, San Juan del Monte, and Quezon City, the last virtually a satellite town, which is the new administrative center of the Republic.

As a result of its long history and changing administration, Manila has a greater variety of architectural styles and street patterns than the other four cities. Old buildings of wood and adobe in the colonial style were found in Intramuros (which was largely destroyed in 1945) and occasionally outside, but in the main business district in Binondo and in the administrative quarter of Ermita modern steel-framed concrete buildings now predominate. Manila is not a city of skyscrapers. Good foundations are impossible in the alluvial sediments, and deep piling to reach the underlying granite or "floating" on enormous cellular rafts of concrete is necessary for large buildings in all the great cities. In the districts of earliest expansion, radiating plazas and boulevards are to be seen; elsewhere the gridiron layout of the typical American city has been adhered to, except in the newer areas to the east, where attempts have been made to relate development to topography. Racial zonation is well marked. The Chinese community inhabits the narrow streets north of the Escolta in the business quarter, and the principal indigenous residential areas lie north of the city in the crowded districts of Tondo, Sampaloc, and Santa Cruz. Europeans, Americans, and wealthy Filipinos reside on the higher ground in the districts of Ermita and Malate, south of the river.

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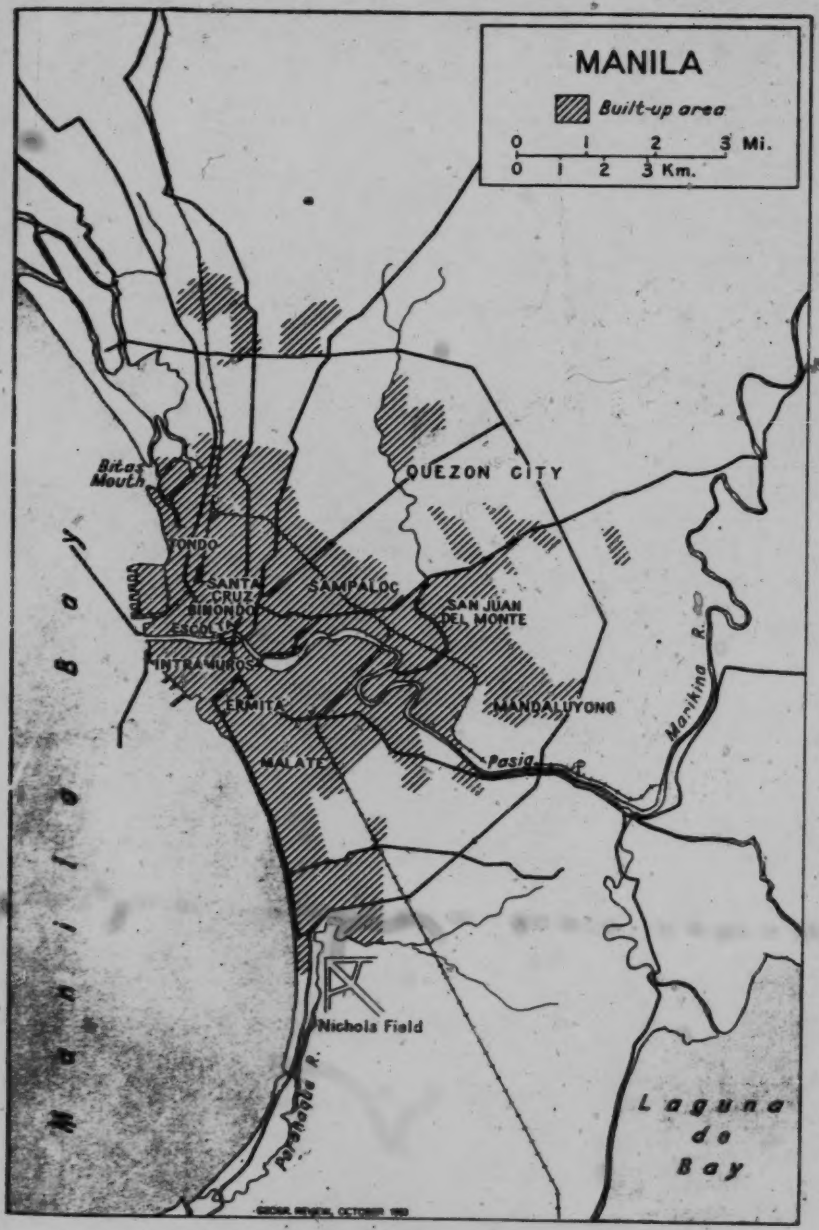

FIG. 1—Location sketch map of Manila.

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361 Modern Batavia, the immediate forebear of Jakarta, dated from the reconstruction of the old city in the early nineteenth century. The expansion of trade and growth of population in the eighteenth century had made necessary the redevelopment of the town, still closely confined around the old fort. In 1808, Governor General Daendels moved the administrative headquarters to Buitenzorg (now Bogor), pulled down the old fort, and used the material for the construction of a new residential district some three miles south of the old town, on the higher ground of Weltevreden. Three miles south of the new district the military camp of Meester Cornelis was established, and thus the axis of future development was aligned north–south, avoiding the low rice-growing plains on each side.

Weltevreden, like the old town, was laid out on a rectangular pattern around large open squares, the Koningsplein and the Waterlooplein. Later in the nineteenth century the old city itself was largely rebuilt, and many of the canals were filled in, but the Town Hall and the buildings of the East India Company still remain. The old town is now the main business and financial district. Weltevreden has experienced several changes in the present century. The northern part between the Koningsplein and the Molenvliet, one of the surviving canals, has become a secondary business district, and its residential character is tending to disappear. The main European residential districts were in south Weltevreden and the newer Gondangdia and Menteng, where the street pattern is not so uniformly rectilinear. These new districts eventually linked up with the development around the military base of Meester Cornelis, and in 1935 the three old foci, Batavia, Weltevreden, and Meester Cornelis, were united in the Municipality of Batavia. [162] As in Manila, racial segregation was pronounced; the Chinese lived in the old town, and in the lacunae between the developments along the roads the indigenous peoples lived in kampongs, a veritable *rus in urbe*. Since the establishment of the Republic, the city, renamed Jakarta, has changed considerably. The kampong area has been greatly enlarged, and old Dutch street and district names have been discarded. Weltevreden has ceased to have a separate identity, and Meester Cornelis has become Djatinagara.

Bangkok owes its transformation from an overgrown floating village into a modern metropolis to the activities of King Chulalongkorn (1868–1910), the creator of modern Siam, whose reign marked the beginning of commercial rice cultivation in the Menam plain and the teak industry in the north. The development of Bangkok was closely bound up with the exporting and processing of both commodities. The Klong Ong Ang marks the first stage in the expansion of the city, to the east of the Grand Palace; development on the right bank was retarded by the absence of bridges over

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FIG. 2.—Location sketch map of Jakarta.

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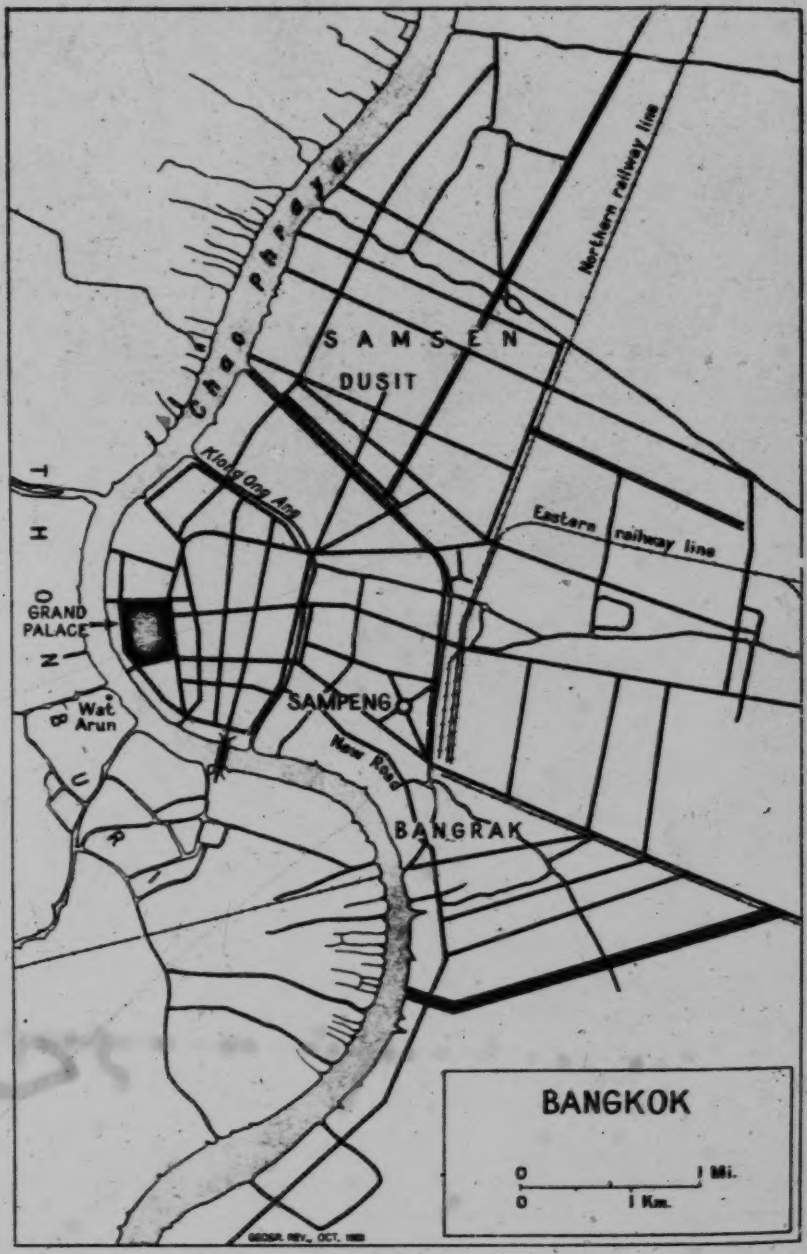

FIG. 3—Location sketch map of Bangkok.

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the Chao Phraya, and even now there has been little expansion in that direction. At the end of the nineteenth century the filling in of the klongs and their replacement by roads were begun. The main axis of development was to the southeast, along the "New Road," as well as along the river. The expansion of commerce necessitated a business district, which was created in the Bangrak area, south of the Chinese quarter of Sampeng, and the increase in government functions led to an expansion of administration into Samsen and Dusit, to the north, while new European residential districts arose in the southeast. The west bank of the river, however, where the high tower of Wat Arun forms the most conspicuous landmark in the city, long remained an indigenous area, with a large population living in boats. The port has lagged behind in adaptation to changed technologies, and improved facilities are long overdue.

Saigon is virtually a twentieth-century city, though the construction of a business quarter and a modern port was begun shortly after the French occupation, and, as in the case of Bangkok, growth has been linked with the rice export trade. However, administration has been relatively more important than in any of the other cities. Before the creation of Vietnam, Cochin China was a French colony, governed from Saigon by French officials exclusively, and the city alternated with Hanoi as the residence of the Governor General of Indochina. With the loss of effective control over most of Tonkin, Saigon has become the main French base and center of power in Indochina.

The direction of expansion of the city has been westward toward Cholon, but Saigon is much more compact than any of the other great cities. The main business district lies in the southern part, close to the Arroyo Chinois, which links the Saigon River with Cholon. The shopping and administrative areas, characterized by wide boulevards, are a little to the northwest, and the European residential area lies on the "Plateau" to the north, a few feet above sea level. Cholon is a complete contrast, and until the war it had a much larger population. Unlike Saigon, which has a rectangular pattern of broad streets, Cholon has grown haphazardly along its many waterways. In 1932 the two cities were combined in a special administrative area, but they have remained largely independent of each other. Saigon is mainly concerned with administration and port activities, whereas Cholon has developed as the principal industrial area of Indochina. As in Jakarta, the enormous postwar increase in population has resulted in a great expansion in the area occupied by temporary dwellings, around the city margins.

The founder of Singapore did not omit to provide his city with a plan

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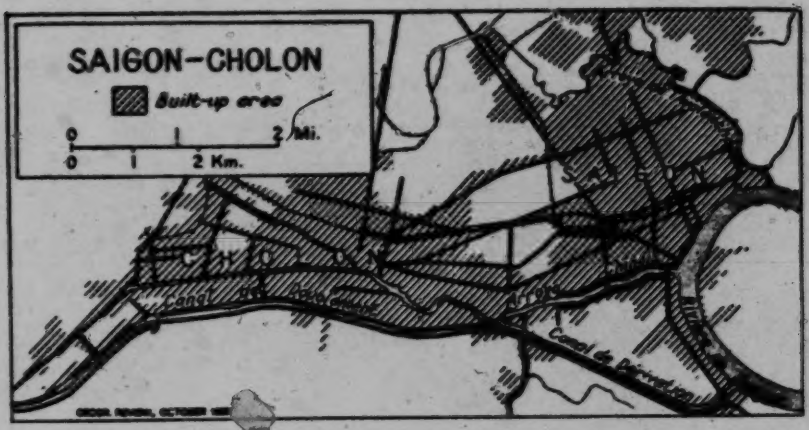

FIG. 4—Location sketch map of Saigon-Cholon.

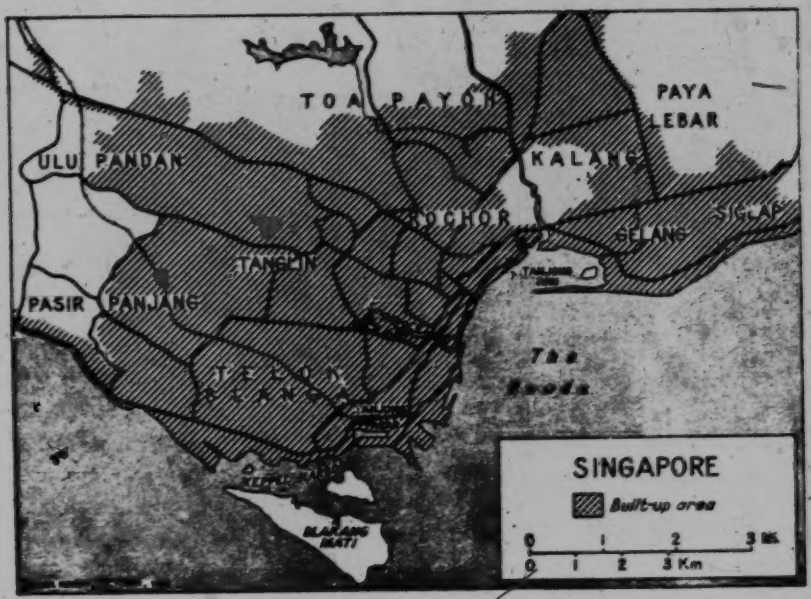

FIG. 5—Location sketch map of Singapore.

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for development.[6] The early mercantile and financial quarter was on the right bank of the Singapore River, where it has remained ever since. Raffles planned a racial residential zonation, the Chinese to be confined to the right bank above the business district, the Europeans to inhabit the opposite bank. Though this was eventually abandoned, Singapore's "Chinatown," with the highest population density in the city, still marks the old Chinese area. The early gridiron pattern was continued in the development to the east, the first direction of expansion. In the nineteenth century the city began to expand onto the somewhat higher land to the north, and here the new European residential district of Tanglin arose; but commercial interests are steadily invading the older part of the better residential areas to the north. With the reclamation in the last 50 years of the numerous swamps that set limits to expansion the lacunae in development have been filled in, and the city sprawls along the south coast of the island for more than 10 miles. Indeed, at no great date in the future the whole island will be effectively urbanized. The Armed Services occupy large areas, and their establishments constitute in effect separate towns. Room for expansion is becoming increasingly difficult to find, but the city's public housing achievements, particularly the new development at Tiong Bahru, on the west side, are worthy of note as being among the best in Asia.

In appearance the five cities are not greatly dissimilar to cities of the West, but there is a more clearly defined zonation of commercial, industrial, and residential development, the last showing a racial differentiation, which, though everywhere tending to break down, is nevertheless still conspicuous. Differences are also discernible in the suburbs, with their two-story "shop-houses," and above all in the outer margins, where "temporary" houses of wood thatched with nipa palm cluster together in overgrown kampongs or barrios, engulfed by the outward sprawl of the cities. Here large numbers of indigenous people live in an environment that is neither urban nor rural.

The central business and "downtown" districts are entirely nonindigenous. International banks, commodity exchanges, and great mercantile houses reproduce all the features of the business quarter of the Western city, though there is a steady infiltration by Indian and Chinese financial and mercantile interests. The main shopping areas are also predominantly European, though here again Chinese and Indian establishments are numerous. Congestion is proportionately as great as in the Western city, and none suffers worse in this respect than Manila. Binondo, the main business district, lies on the

[6] For a full account see E. H. G. Dobby: Singapore: Town and Country, *Geogr. Rev.*, Vol. 30, 1940, pp. 84–109.

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361 north bank of the Pasig, and circulation is impeded by the bridges over the river; approach from the north is slowed by bottlenecks where narrow bridges span the many small canals, or *esteros*, which make the district virtually an island.

Administration is a main function of the five cities. So far as Jakarta and Singapore are concerned, it is highly likely that the gradual growth of a parliamentary democracy in the mother country, which necessitated an increase in the size of the colonial administration,[7] was a dominant factor in city growth; similar tendencies have been observed in the other cities, though the degree varies considerably. The administrative areas are distinct, but the enormous growth in official business in the last 25 years and the expansion of the cities have necessitated some decentralization of administrative functions. Only Singapore is not an official capital, but despite the creation of an administrative capital for the Federation of Malaya at Kuala Lumpur, Singapore is unlikely to suffer from this apparent loss of government business.[8]

The Ports and Their Functions

504 361 In the cities of Southeast Asia, lacking the heavy industrialization that has accompanied the development of ports in the West, port functions are relatively more important. Nevertheless, in any great port a certain amount of industrialization is inevitable, and the cities already possess a considerable industrial variety.

Unlike the smaller ports of their respective territories, which serve mainly local needs, the five cities are international ports, with a commerce that is becoming more widespread as the ties of former colonies with the homeland are loosened. The ports handle a large proportion of the export trade of their territories, but an even larger proportion of the import trade; distribution is thus a principal function in the economic life of the cities.

The modern ports, constructed on reclaimed land, are entirely artificial, but nowhere, even in the tidal ports of Bangkok and Saigon, are enclosed basins necessary. The modern ports, however, have not completely succeeded in displacing the old harbors; the Pasig and Singapore Rivers continue to carry a heavy lighter traffic from vessels in the Roads, with a great saving in port dues.

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[7] Amry Vandenbosch: The Dutch East Indies (3rd edit., Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1942), p. 75.

[8] Nevertheless, Singapore still is, as it always was, an administrative center of the first importance. The Colony has its own government offices, and also those of the Commissioner-General for the United Kingdom in South-East Asia. It contains the headquarters of the Far Eastern Naval, Military, and Air Forces of the British Commonwealth, and many Commonwealth and foreign consular and diplomatic offices. Finally, the City of Singapore has its own Municipal Council, which is responsible for the administration of many public utilities.

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Manila is unusual in possessing two harbors, one north of the Pasig, which handles the large interisland traffic, and the main harbor for trans-oceanic vessels, south of the entrance to the river. The Pasig itself is dredged to a depth of 18 feet as far as Jones Bridge, and is lined with quays. Native craft carry a considerable traffic upstream and along the many esteros. Manila normally handles about 30 per cent of the total export trade of the Philippine Republic, and more than 90 per cent of the imports.

With some 30 million tons of shipping entering and clearing annually, Singapore is one of the world's great ports. The functional pattern is similar to that of Manila. The modern port of Keppel Harbor handles most of the trade with the more distant parts of Asia and the rest of the world, and much of the entrepôt trade with South China and the rest of Southeast Asia is handled in the Roads. The political separation of Singapore from the Federation of Malaya complicates assessment of the trade of the port, since official statistics now exclude trade with the Federation; though it is not quite clear what proportion of Singapore's trade is conducted with the Federation. in 1951 the port handled 74 per cent of Malaya's imports and 67 per cent of the exports. Singapore shares with Bangkok the distinction of exporting more by value than it imports; the other ports all have an "unfavorable" trade balance. The great naval base, considerably enlarged since the war, is well removed from the commercial port; it lies on Johore Strait, some 17 miles from the city, almost as far distant as the Cavite base is from Manila.

Tanjoengpriok, the port of Jakarta, is of all the modern ports the farthest from the city center. Its construction some six miles northeast of the city was necessitated by the silting of the Tjiliwong, which has built up an expanse of mud flats along the coast more than a mile in width; the flats have, however, been put to productive use through the excavation of fishponds. The old harbor, connected with the modern port by the Antjol Canal, does not compare in importance with the Singapore River or the Pasig, nor does the rather large coastal and interisland trade have an independent harbor, as in Manila, though one of the Tanjoengpriok basins is used almost exclusively for this purpose. In the unrest that preceded the formation of the Indonesian Republic, the trade of Tanjoengpriok decreased greatly, but since 1950 recovery has been rapid. Some ground, however, has been lost to other ports: in 1951 Tanjoengpriok handled only 10 per cent of the exports of Indonesia, though its share of the imports was better maintained, with some 52 per cent of the national total.

Saigon is both a commercial and a naval port, though as a naval base it cannot rival Singapore or Cavite. It is approached by way of the Saigon

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504 River, which, though possessing adequate depth for vessels up to 30 feet in
361 draft, has a sinuous channel, which prevents ships longer than 550 feet from ascending to the port. The strong scour of the semidiurnal tides reduces the necessity for dredging. The port occupies about three miles of the right bank of the river and is divided into three sections. Overseas trade is handled by the quays between the Arroyo Chinois and the Canal de Dérivation, in the Khan Hoi district; smaller vessels use the quays nearer the city; and the naval port lies farthest upstream, close to the Arroyo de l'Avalanche. Lighters convey cargoes from ships anchored in the river below the city to wharves along the Arroyo Chinois and the Canal de Dérivation, the twin waterways that link Saigon with Cholon. Before 1939, Saigon handled about 40 per cent of the total foreign trade of Indochina; rice formed about 50 per cent by weight of the exports. At the present time the military operations taking place in the country have greatly reduced the trade of Saigon, and the rice export is only some 100,000 tons a year.

Bangkok alone of all the ports is still inaccessible to large ocean-going vessels. A bar at the mouth of the Menam Chao Phraya prevents entry, and the terminal for large vessels has long been Gaw Si Kang, an island in the Gulf of Siam east of the river mouth. From Gaw Si Kang strings of lighters are drawn by tugs to the wharves of Bangkok, which extend for about six miles along the left bank below the Grand Palace. The dredging of the bar to allow ocean-going vessels to reach the port would have presented no great difficulties, but opposition from the lightering interests prevented anything from being done until shortly before the war, when work was begun on a new port at Klong Toi, about five miles below the city. It is now proposed, as part of a plan to expand rice cultivation in Thailand, to deepen the channel so that vessels of 26-foot draft can ascend to the port. Bangkok has an almost complete monopoly of the foreign trade of Thailand, and in a real sense it is the only port of the country.

Industrial Development

32 The five cities contain a large proportion of the total industrial capacity
361 of their respective territories. Industry is well represented, though much of
38 it is better described as processing than as manufacturing, and its range of
39 activities is continually increasing. The primary processing of foodstuffs and raw materials is dominant; rice milling is particularly important, except in Singapore, but rubber, copra, sago, tapioca, hemp, sugar, and tobacco all assume considerable local significance. A beginning has been made with the higher stages of manufacturing, such as rubber products and even foam

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rubber, in Singapore; other manufactures are furniture, boats, footwear, glass, bricks and tiles, oils and soaps, electric batteries, and certain chemical products. Manufacturing industries proper use relatively little machinery and power and produce for the home market, in which there is a considerable element of local protection. Food and drink industries are well developed (including brewing and distilling); textiles are poorly developed. Heavy industry is confined to the repair and refitting of vessels. All the ports have forges and foundries for making minor repairs; Singapore and Jakarta, which have dry-dock facilities, can undertake more extensive work. Repair shops for maintenance of railway equipment are located in all the cities except Singapore; the assembly of imported motor vehicles is carried on in Manila, Jakarta, and Singapore. Industry relies largely on electric power, which is expensive because of the paucity of local coal supplies.

Small-scale industry is almost entirely in the hands of the Chinese; the larger undertakings are overwhelmingly European-owned, though there are some large Chinese industrial establishments. Only a small proportion of the inhabitants of the cities are engaged in industry: in Singapore, where industry is expanding rapidly, only 11 per cent of the adult working population were employed in industrial establishments in the census of 1947. This unduly low figure does not take account of the large employment in the establishments of the Armed Services, much of which was industrial.

The industrial areas lie close to the port or along the rivers and canals. They are surrounded by areas of high population density; for the relatively high cost and limited availability of public transport operate to retard the divorce of place of work and residence, which is so conspicuous a feature of the Western city. Newer industrial areas, however, are appearing on the margins of the cities, and as the range of industrial activity grows, industry is likely to become more widely dispersed.

Population

All the five cities would have probably reached the one-million level in a comparatively short period if the war had not intervened. During the Japanese occupation, population decreased in the cities because of the shortage of food, and the wartime dislocation that elsewhere in Asia resulted in a large influx of rural dwellers into the cities did not operate here. With the end of the war the tide set strongly in the opposite direction. The breakdown of effective administration in many parts of Southeast Asia following the Japanese surrender, armed insurrections against the central governments, the struggle for independence, the depredations of extreme

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factions, and the difficulty of protecting disliked minorities, particularly the Chinese, all combined to attract many rural dwellers to the comparative safety of the cities. This immigration of refugees was perhaps greatest in Saigon-Cholon: from a population of about 300,000 at the time of the Japanese occupation the twin cities have increased to an estimated 1,400,000. Jakarta has grown almost as spectacularly. At the census of 1930 the city of Batavia had a population of a little more than half a million; by 1950 the Indonesian government estimated Jakarta's population to be not less than two million; and at present the city may well contain nearer three million. Even on the most conservative estimate it is by far the most populous city in the whole of Southeast Asia.

In the census of 1948, Greater Manila had a population of 1,180,000; however, several separately recorded districts of Rizal Province are integral parts of the built-up area, and their inclusion raises the total to more than a million and a quarter. The 14 districts of the City of Manila proper showed a 58 per cent increase over the 1939 census figures. Singapore and Bangkok have been relatively unaffected by postwar immigration from the country. In the intercensal period 1931–1947 the population of the island of Singapore grew by some 68 per cent, owing to the gradual establishment of an equality in the sex composition of the Chinese population, together with a steady decline in the death rate; allowing for natural increase since the census, the population of Singapore Colony at present is about 1,100,000, of whom about 70 per cent reside in the municipal area. Before the war Bangkok was approaching 900,000, but in the census of 1947 the population was only 1,116,600;[9] hence the war may have somewhat retarded the city's growth.

The present rate of growth due to natural increase seems to be about 3 per cent a year in all the cities, which is much higher than the rate in their respective national territories. This will present many difficult problems of development. As might be expected, the already overcrowded districts have experienced the greatest increases; in Manila, for example, the districts of Tondo, Sampaloc, and Santa Cruz have increased their populations by 80 per cent or more since 1939. As compared with Western cities, densities in the poorest areas are extremely high; 1500 persons to an acre would not be excessive for the net density of the worst blocks.[10] On the other hand, density

[9] With Thonburi. According to the *Statistical Year Book of Thailand*, N.S., Vol. 1, 1952, recently received, the total for the two is 1,178,881.

[10] Net density is the average density of the population of a given residential area, which consists solely of the dwellings and one-half of the width of streets giving access thereto. The figure quoted here is an estimate by the Singapore Improvement Trust of the situation in the most overcrowded part of the city.

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development in the best residential districts is very low, frequently one or two houses to an acre, so that the cities sprawl widely. 361

From the beginning, Chinese immigrants have constituted an important element of the cities. At first encouraged, and later feared, by the authorities, the Chinese were confined to special quarters, such as the famous Parián of Manila, where they have tended to remain. Dislike of them has been a universal rallying point of numerous indigenous politicians, and the murder of many Chinese in the period following the Japanese collapse recalls the massacres of the early history of Manila and Batavia. Where immigration has been comparatively free, at least until fairly recent times, the Chinese have become a majority: Singapore is more than 77 per cent Chinese—the largest Chinese community outside China—and in Bangkok more than 60 per cent of the population are Chinese or of mixed Chinese-Thai ancestry. The lower proportions of Chinese in the other three cities are due to the earlier restrictions on immigration, together with an influx of indigenous peoples from rural areas in the postwar period. Events in China, however, have everywhere increased illegal Chinese immigration. The removal of many Chinese from rural Cochin China to the Saigon-Cholon area has raised the percentage of Chinese in Cholon to about 60, and it is probably not less than 30 in the combined cities. In Manila and Jakarta it is much lower, and the total number of Chinese is not easy to estimate; both cities contain more than 50,000, and the number of persons of mixed Chinese and indigenous blood is undoubtedly much larger. Despite many vicissitudes, the Chinese have proved indispensable, and their importance in the economic life of the cities can hardly be overstated. 162 167

Europeans constitute only a very small proportion of the population of the cities. Only in prewar Batavia did they amount to as much as 5 per cent of the total, and this was in part due to the inclusion of Eurasians as Europeans in the Dutch statistics. Of the other immigrant groups, the most numerous are Indians and Pakistanis, who in Singapore made up 7 per cent of the population in 1947. Jakarta has a small community of Arabs, engaged in shopkeeping or moneylending.

The indigenous peoples have a higher birth rate than the immigrant peoples, but also a higher death rate, so that the relative proportions of the two groups have tended to remain the same. Lately the migration of indigenous peoples to the cities, especially in the new independent states, has altered the balance somewhat, and the partly alien character of the cities may tend to decline. Simultaneously, restrictions have been placed on the economic activities of the Chinese in the Philippines and Thailand, but the outcome of these measures is unlikely to be that intended.

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The Future of the Cities

361 The future of the great cities remains problematic. They have attained their present size and pre-eminence through their role as intermediaries in the interchange of foodstuffs and raw materials with the manufactured products of the West, but this activity has been carried on entirely by aliens. So long as this economic pattern persists, the great port cities will continue to occupy a leading position in the life of Southeast Asia. But the pattern may not persist, and it is clear that the economic development of Southeast Asia will include an increasing attention to home production of both foodstuffs and manufactures. Southeast Asia may return to the political instability of precolonial times; it may become part of the Communist sphere; or it may succeed in maintaining neutrality between the Communist and non-Communist worlds. In any event, the great cities cannot escape some readjustment, and they may well lose ground to other centers. Already there is opposition to the dominant position of the great city in national affairs. If extremist elements prevail, it appears likely that other cities may come to the fore; just as Shanghai has been supplanted by a revived Peking, so the victory of Vietminh would be likely to confer supremacy on Tonkin. The future of Singapore is particularly difficult to forecast, since it is the only city that is not an administrative capital of a state. Its integration into the Federation of Malaya would give the immigrant Chinese numerical superiority and would be strongly resisted by the Malays of the peninsula. Political changes in China and Southeast Asia itself may make the entrepôt trade difficult to maintain, and as a center of world communications Singapore has already lost ground to Bangkok, which is better placed for trans-Asian and trans-Pacific air routes. Moreover, its utter dependence on outside sources for food,[11] and to some extent for water, must greatly limit its usefulness as a strategic base—problems that have already given rise to some concern. Of all the cities, only Bangkok appears to be without a potential rival, despite an attempt in 1945 to relocate the administrative capital.[12] It may well be that the great cities' brightest future lies in an increase in the range and pace of industrialization.

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[11] "Food Supplies for Singapore," Singapore, 1951.

[12] Bangkok's central position in Southeast Asia, equidistant from South and Far East Asia, is reflected in its selection as the headquarters of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East.